



73

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



TODD MCFARLANE AND IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS...

THE HEAP

DEDICATED TO
John Leekley



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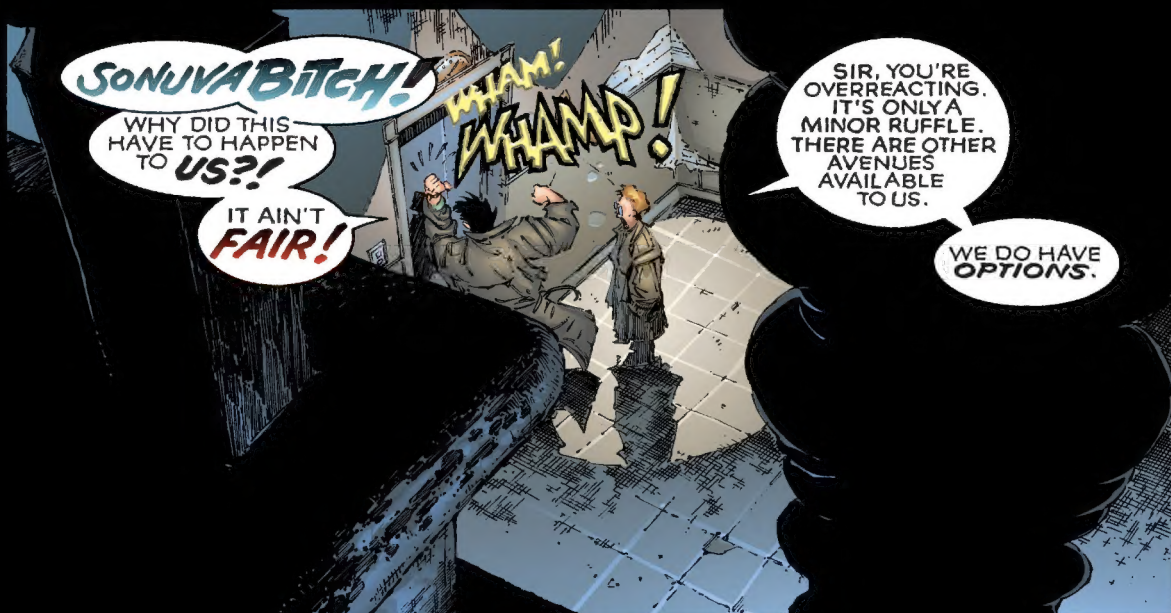
SPAWN #72 Summary

Bootsy steps between Spawn and Wolfram, the vampire, to keep them from destroying each other. When Wolfram mentions a nest of vampires in the area Spawn goes to investigate just as the police arrive and take Bootsy in for questioning. At the police station, Bootsy passes a cryptic message to Sam and Twitch. Elsewhere, in an abandoned warehouse, a child is being tortured. Spawn breaks in, kills the abusers and releases the child who reveals an emblem blazoned across his belly.



TODD MCFARLANE
PRODUCTIONS

www.spawn.com



SONUVA BITCH!

WHY DID THIS
HAVE TO HAPPEN
TO **US?!**

IT AIN'T
FAIR!

**WHAM!
WHAMP!**

SIR, YOU'RE
OVERREACTING.
IT'S ONLY A
MINOR RUFFLE.
THERE ARE OTHER
AVENUES
AVAILABLE
TO US.

WE DO HAVE
OPTIONS.



Ulp!:-
YOU
MEAN--?

YES, SIR.
THE
STAIRS.

I WILL
TELEPHONE
BUILDING
MAINTENANCE
IN THE MORNING
AND LET THEM KNOW
THE ELEVATOR IS
OUT AGAIN. I'M
SURE IT WILL
BE REPAIRED
SHORTLY.

Huff :-:-
REMINDE ME--
Puff :-:- REMIND
ME AGAIN
HOW MUCH
WE'RE PAYING
FOR THIS
DUMP?

SIGNIFICANTLY
MORE THAN WE'VE
BEEN BRINGING IN
LATELY. I'M AFRAID.
NOW **BREATHE,**
SIR.



ODD.

WHAT'S THE MATTER?



THE LIGHT APPEARS TO BE OUT.

I TELL YA, WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON THAT LAND-LORD...



I BELIEVE WE HAVE A **FLASH-LIGHT** SOMEWHERE.



GENTLEMEN, WE MUST **SPEAK**...

Huh--?

COG?

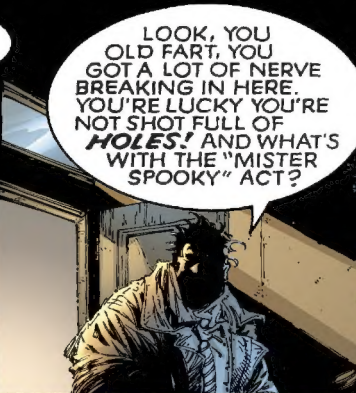


WE MUST SPEAK ABOUT THE **HELLSPAWN**. MATTERS ARE ABOUT TO BECOME DECIDEDLY MORE COMPLICATED.

I WARNED YOU TWO THAT YOU WERE CHOSEN TO **ASSIST** HIM, TO BE HIS EYES, HIS **HANDS** IN THE HUMAN WORLD.



SOMETHING IS COMING--



LOOK, YOU OLD FART, YOU GOT A LOT OF NERVE BREAKING IN HERE. YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE NOT SHOT FULL OF **HOLES!** AND WHAT'S WITH THE "MISTER SPOOKY" ACT?



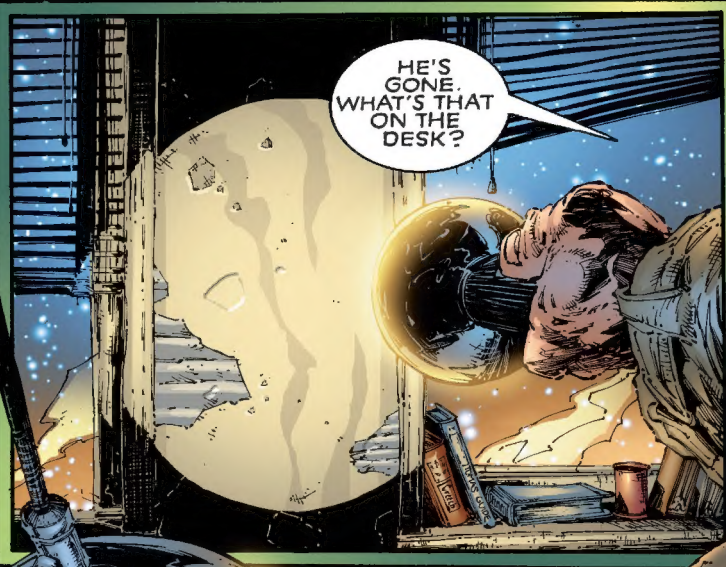
I MUST CONCUR. THESE CRYPTIC ENCOUNTERS AND VAGUE CIRCUMLOCUTIONS ARE WEARING A BIT THIN, MR. COGLIOSTRO.



IT IS TIME YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOUR NEW **MASTER**. HE WILL BE NEEDING YOU ALL TOO **SOON**, I'M AFRAID.

I HAD HOPED YOU TWO WOULD HAVE WORKED MOST OF IT OUT ON YOUR OWN. AS YOU HAVEN'T, I'M LEAVING YOU A LITTLE PRESENT.

IT SHOULD SHED **SOME LIGHT** ON THE SITUATION.

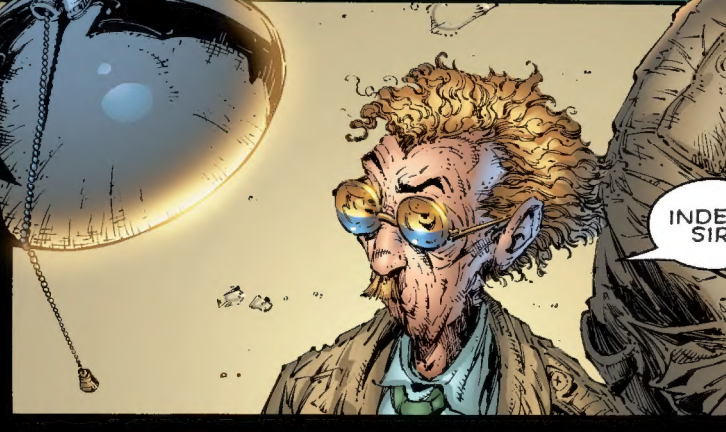


HE'S GONE. WHAT'S THAT ON THE DESK?



SOME KINDA **DOSSIER**.

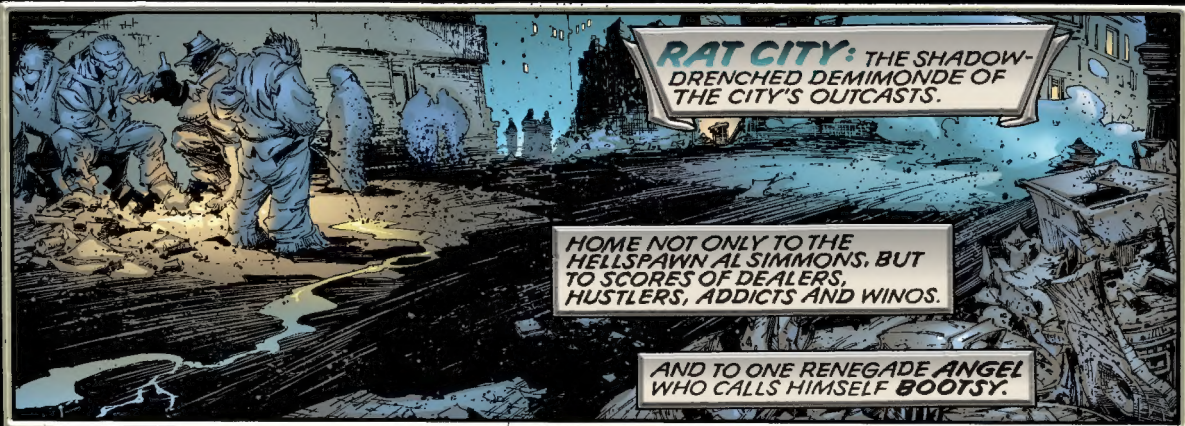
I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU, TWITCH, THAT OLD FOSSIL IS REALLY GETTING ON MY **NERVES**.



INDEED, SIR.



LT. COLONEL SIMMONS, A.



RAT CITY: THE SHADOW-DRENCHED DEMIMONDE OF THE CITY'S OUTCASTS.

HOME NOT ONLY TO THE HELLSPAWN AL SIMMONS, BUT TO SCORES OF DEALERS, HUSTLERS, ADDICTS AND WINOS.

AND TO ONE RENEGADE ANGEL WHO CALLS HIMSELF **BOOTSY**.

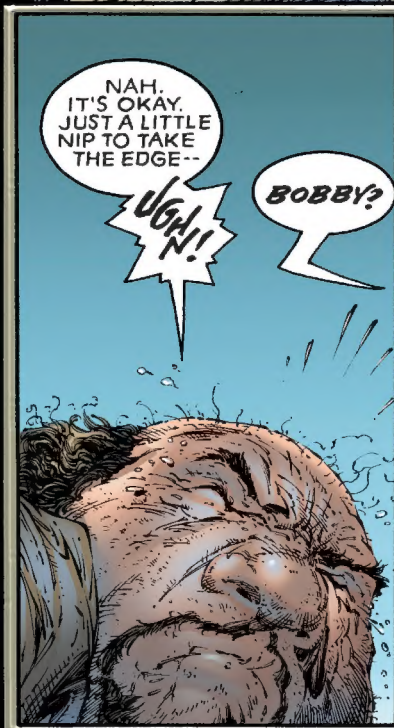


HEY, BOBBY. HOW YA FEELIN', PAL? YOU OKAY NOW?

BOOTSY, I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED, BUT I THINK I OWE YOU MY LIFE. * WHATEVER YOU DID... THANKS, PAL.

DON'T MENTION IT. JUST GO EASY ON THE **GRAPE** THERE, OKAY?

* SPAWN TO.



NAH. IT'S OKAY. JUST A LITTLE NIP TO TAKE THE EDGE--

UGH!

BOBBY?



I'M FINE, BUDDY. IT COMES AND GOES LIKE THIS...

OKAY, WELL TAKE IT EASY, ALL RIGHT...? LISTEN, I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.



I MIGHT HAVE TO GO AWAY. MAYBE FOR **GOOD**.

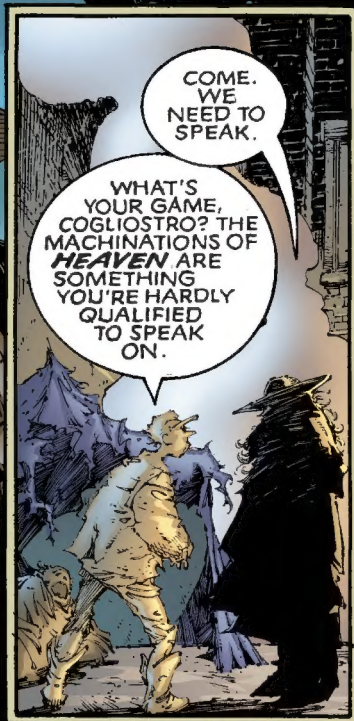


I COULD BE IN TROUBLE. I-- I DID SOMETHING I WASN'T SUPPOSED TO DO.

TROUBLE? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

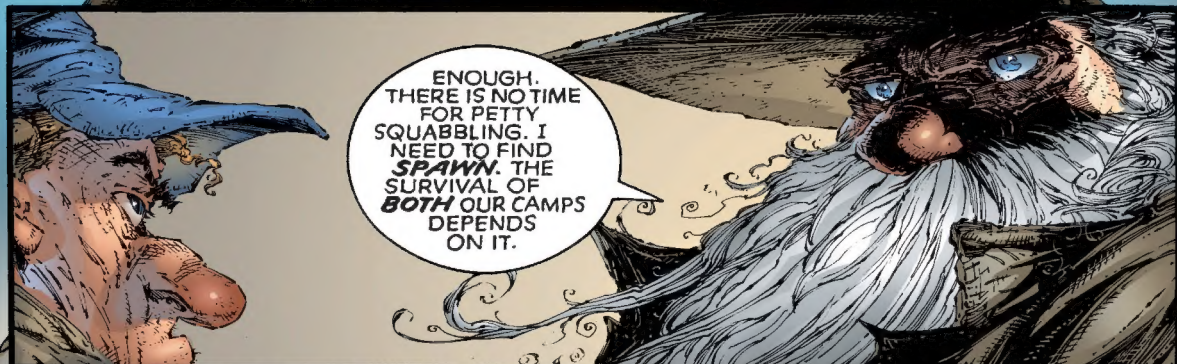


HE MEDDLED IN THE AFFAIRS OF MORTALS BY SAVING YOUR LIFE. NOW HE FEARS **CELESTIAL** RETRIBUTION. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, "BOOTSY"?



COME. WE NEED TO SPEAK.

WHAT'S YOUR GAME, COGLIOSTRO? THE MACHINATIONS OF **HEAVEN** ARE SOMETHING YOU'RE HARDLY QUALIFIED TO SPEAK ON.



ENOUGH. THERE IS NO TIME FOR PETTY SQUABBLING. I NEED TO FIND **SPAWN**. THE SURVIVAL OF **BOTH** OUR CAMPS DEPENDS ON IT.

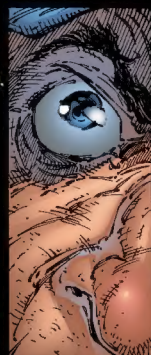


HEY, WHATEVER YOU TWO BEEN DRINKING, HOW 'BOUT YOU PASS THE BOTTLE!

DON'T ACT SO SURPRISED. YOU **FEEL** IT **TOO**. DON'T YOU, BOOTSY?



"THERE IS A STORM GATHERING. A **THIRD FORCE** WHICH LIES BETWEEN **HEAVEN** AND **HELL**. IT CARES NOTHING OF THE WAR WE WAGE.



"BUT IT COULD PROVE THE UNDOING OF THE **HELL-SPAWN**. IF AL SIMMONS PERISHES, WE BOTH KNOW WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.



"THE **FINAL BATTLE** WILL COMMENCE... AND **EARTH** WILL BE TORN APART IN THE PROCESS."

A FEW WEEKS AGO, EDDIE BECKETT WAS ABOUT AS LOW AS A MAN COULD GET. HOPELESS, HELPLESS, NOT A FRIEND IN THE WORLD.

BUT THAT'S ALL CHANGED. NOW EDDIE SEES HIMSELF AS A SQUIRE OF THE STREETS. A MAN OF ACTION.

THE KIND OF MAN WHO GETS THINGS DONE.

C'MON, EDDIE. I'M DRY AS A DESERT. HOW YOU GOING TO SCORE THE GOODS?

LEAVE IT TO ME. I'M MADE TO AMAZE.

ALL RIGHT THEN...

LET ME HAVE A PINT OF OLD HARPER, THREE BOTTLES OF T-BIRD, SOME OF THAT JERKY, A COUPLE OF THOSE SKIN MAGS AND A CARTON OF CIGS.

YOU KNOW MY BRAND.

Uh-uh.

I'M GONNA GIVE YOU ONE PACK OF CIGARETTES 'CAUSE I'M A NICE GUY. BUT YOU GOT TO EARN THE REST.



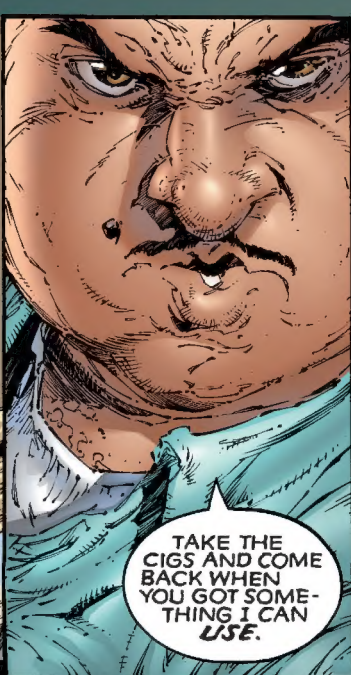
COME ON, POPS. YOU KNOW I'M GOOD FOR IT.

YOU AIN'T BEEN GOOD FOR MUCH LATELY. LET ME EXPLAIN THE CONCEPT OF **TRADE** TO YOU.



YOU GIVE SOMETHING OF VALUE TO ME, AND IN RETURN I GIVE *YOU* SOMETHING OF VALUE.

BUT LATELY YOU AIN'T BROUGHT ME NOTHING.

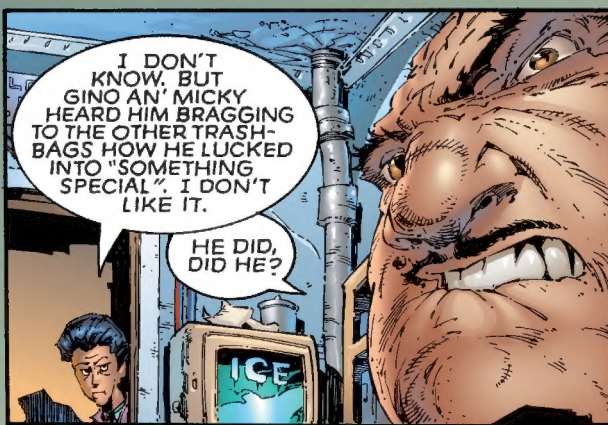


TAKE THE CIGS AND COME BACK WHEN YOU GOT SOMETHING I CAN **USE**.



HEY, POPS! WAS THAT THAT NO GOOD BUM WHO WAS JUST IN HERE? I DON'T TRUST HIM. HEAR HE'S **HOLDING OUT** ON US.

WHAT, HE'S GOT THE **HOPE DIAMOND** HIDDEN UNDER THEM RAGS OF HIS?



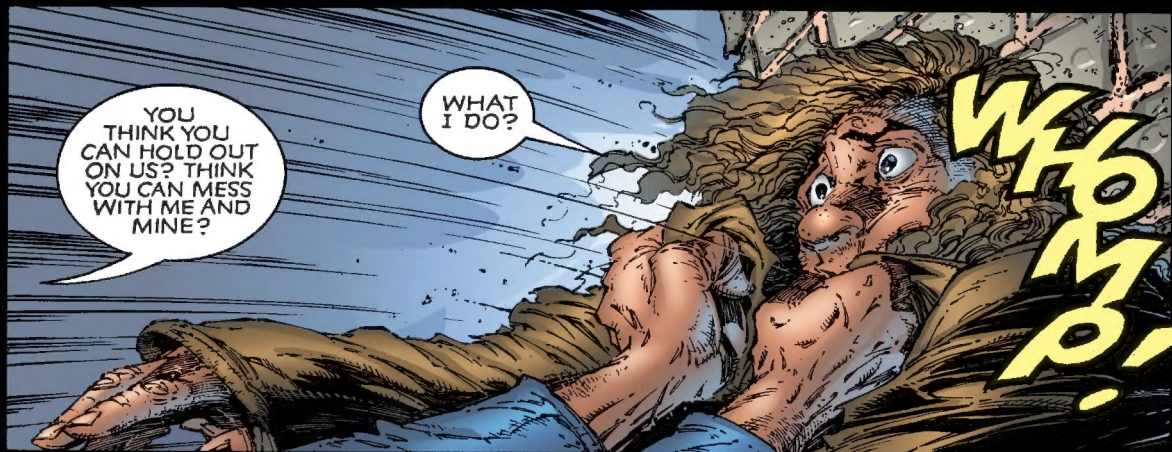
I DON'T KNOW, BUT GINO AN' MICKY HEARD HIM BRAGGING TO THE OTHER TRASH-BAGS HOW HE LUCKED INTO "SOMETHING SPECIAL". I DON'T LIKE IT.

HE DID, DID HE?



WELL, I STILL DON'T THINK HE COULD HAVE MUCH OF NOTHING, BUT YOU CHECK IT OUT JUST THE SAME.

DON'T WORRY, POPS. I'LL TALK TO HIM. LET HIM KNOW GENTLY THAT YOU DON'T MUCK WITH THE **DiMINOS**.



YOU THINK YOU CAN HOLD OUT ON US? THINK YOU CAN MESS WITH ME AND MINE?

WHAT I DO?

WHOMP!

WORD IS, YOU CAME ACROSS SOMETHING OF *VALUE*. GOT GREEDY.

YOU KNOW THE DEAL. YOUR JOB IS KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.

YOU TELL US WHEN SOMEONE IS GOIN' AWAY FOR THE WEEKEND, OR WHEN SOME RICH KID PARKS HIS CAR IN A STUPID PLACE.

THAT'S YOUR JOB.

IT'S *NOT* YOUR PLACE TO BE LIFTING GOODS FOR *YOURSELF!*

SO, WHATEVER IT IS YOU FOUND, *HAND IT OVER.*

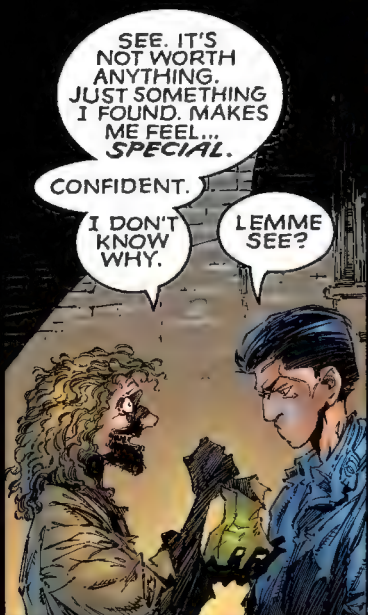
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT. LOOK--

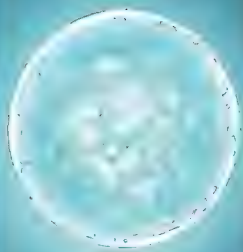
--IT WAS JUST TALK.

IT DON'T MEAN NOTHING TO ANYONE BUT ME.

LOOK, I'LL *SHOW* YOU.

JUST BIG TALK.





HOURS
PASS,
THE
MOON
ARCS
THROUGH
THE
NIGHT
SKY

SPRAWLED AT
THE LITERAL
CROSSROADS
OF HEAVEN
AND HELL,
EDDIE
BECKETT LIES
DYING, HIS
BODY NUMB TO
THE BLOOD-
WARM BREEZE
THAT FLOWS
THROUGH
THE ALLEYS.

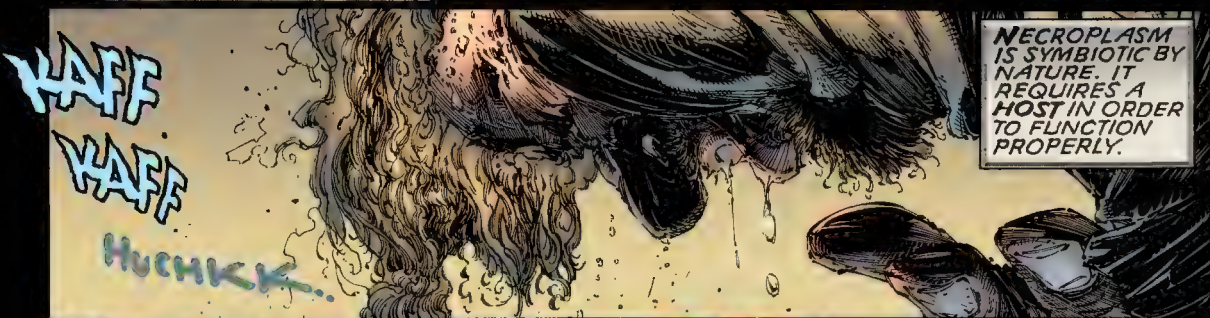
AGAINST THE
ACHING, SLOW
DRIP OF TIME,
HE GLINGS
DESPERATELY
TO HIS LAST
MOMENTS

HE DOES NOT
KNOW THAT THE
STRANGE, EERIE
SUBSTANCE HE
SO COVETED, IN
FACT THE FLUID
BEHIND HIS
AGGRESSIVE-
NESS...

... CONTAINS A
PORTION OF THE
HELLSPAWN'S
POWER.*

* SEE LAST ISSUE
FOR DETAILS.

DYING WITH SLOW
AND SHALLOW BREATHS,
HE DOESN'T NOTICE THE
NECROPLASM
INCHING LANGUIDLY
TOWARDS HIM.



NECROPLASM IS SYMBIOTIC BY NATURE. IT REQUIRES A HOST IN ORDER TO FUNCTION PROPERLY.



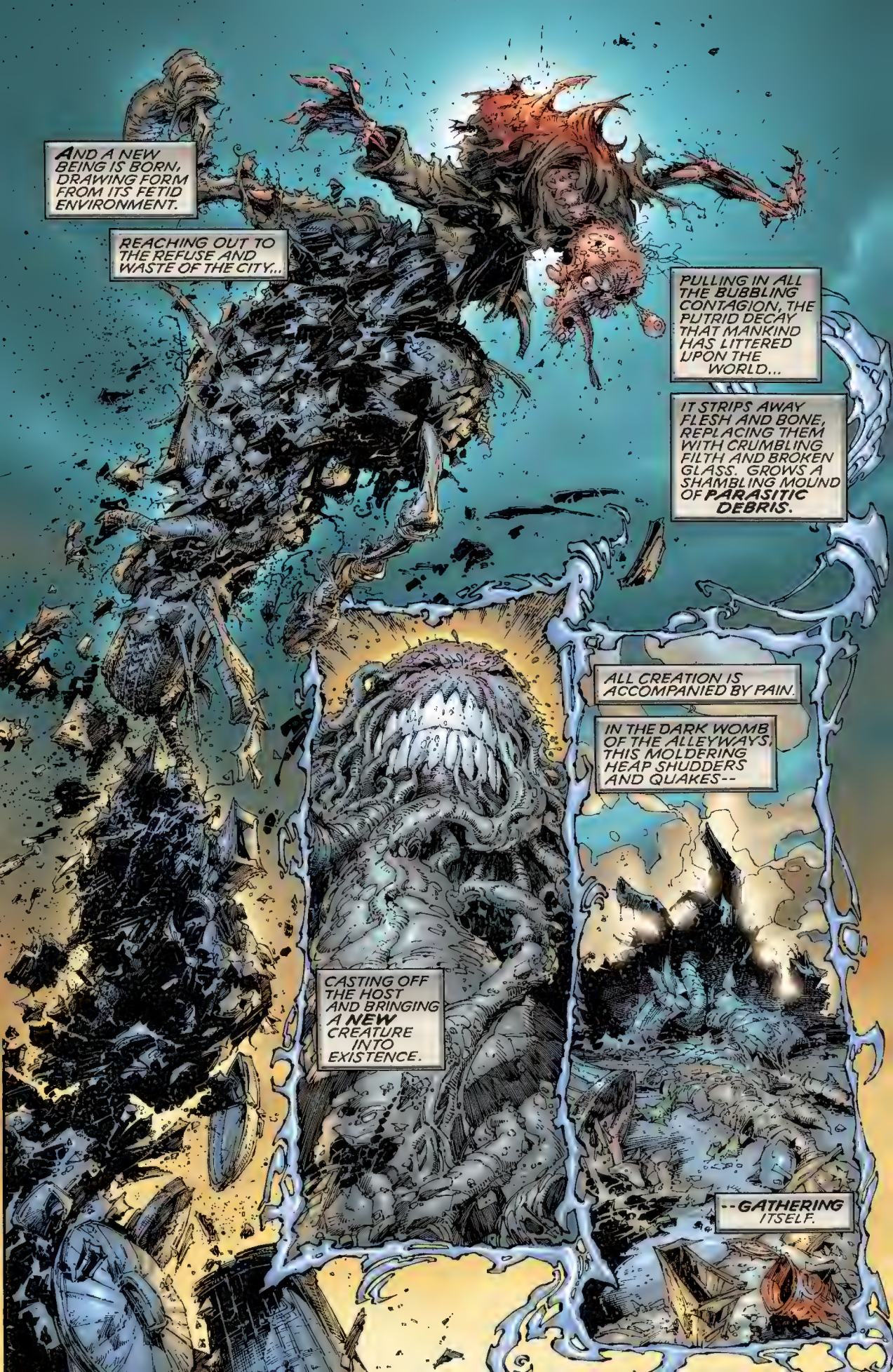
IT SEEPS INTO HIS WOUNDS, MIXING WITH BLOOD... PERMEATING HIS ORGANS, EATING THE MARROW FROM HIS BONES.

RE-CREATING THE HOST FOR ITS OWN NEEDS.

BUT EDDIE BECKETT DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS.

HE ONLY UNDERSTANDS THE PAIN.

WHA-
WHAT IS
HAPPENING
TO ME?!



AND A NEW
BEING IS BORN,
DRAWING FORM
FROM ITS FETID
ENVIRONMENT.

REACHING OUT TO
THE REFUSE AND
WASTE OF THE CITY...

PULLING IN ALL
THE BUBBLING
CONTAGION, THE
PUTRID DECAY
THAT MANKIND
HAS LITTERED
UPON THE
WORLD...

IT STRIPS AWAY
FLESH AND BONE,
REPLACING THEM
WITH CRUMBLING
FILTH AND BROKEN
GLASS. GROWS A
SHAMBLING MOUND
OF PARASITIC
DEBRIS.

ALL CREATION IS
ACCOMPANIED BY PAIN.

IN THE DARK WOMB
OF THE ALLEYWAYS,
THIS MOLDERING
HEAP SHUDDERS
AND QUAKES--

CASTING OFF
THE HOST
AND BRINGING
A NEW
CREATURE
INTO
EXISTENCE.

--GATHERING
ITSELF.

AND THEN,
IN THE TOXIC
YELLOW LIGHT OF
THE STREETLAMPS,
THE CREATURE
RISES.



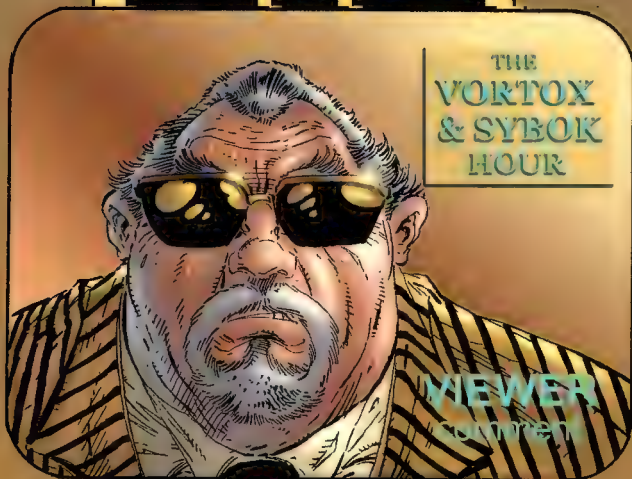


...WHERE TEMPERATURES CONTINUED TO SOAR FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE DAY. THE PHENOMENON HAS METEOROLOGISTS BAFLED, DUE NOT ONLY TO THE UNUSUAL JUMP IN TEMPERATURE, BUT ALSO BY THE NOTABLE ABSENCE OF HIGH PRESSURE SYSTEMS AND OTHER TYPICAL INDICATORS. ALSO UNUSUAL IS THE FACT THAT THE SEVERE HEAT WAVE IS EXTREMELY LOCALIZED, AFFECTING ONLY ROUGHLY ONE HALF OF THE BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN.

ACCORDING TO A SPOKESPERSON FOR THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, RESEARCHERS ARE EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE INCIDENT IS BEING CAUSED BY SOME KIND OF GEO-THERMIC ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, THEY POINT OUT THAT GIVEN THE BEDROCK COMPOSITION OF MANHATTAN ISLAND, IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT SUCH IS THE CASE.



IN NEW YORK, FILMING ON THE UPCOMING SUBWAY TERRORIST THRILLER "*THIRD RAIL*" HAD TO BE HALTED YESTERDAY AFTER THE CAST AND CREW COMPLAINED OF SEVERE HEAT FATIGUE AND *DEHYDRATION*. AT ONE POINT TEMPERATURES BROKE THE *130 MARK* UNDER THE PUNISHING GLOW OF THE STAGE LIGHTS. HERVE LAFAYVRE, THE CONTROVERSIAL FRENCH DIRECTOR OF "*NIGHT BRIGADE*" AND "*THE 13TH APOSTLE*," INITIALLY OBJECTED TO THE NOTION OF CEASING PRODUCTION, BERATING THE FILM'S STARS AND REPORTEDLY CALLING THEM "*WHINING, OVERPAID, PAMPERED BABIES*". SCREEN ACTORS GUILD REPRESENTATIVES INTERVENED AND THE STUDIO FINALLY ORDERED FILMING TO BE SHUT DOWN FOR THE DAY, BUT NOT BEFORE *SEVERAL* PEOPLE WERE RUSHED TO THE HOSPITAL. MIKE OVITZ, WHERE ARE YOU WHEN WE *NEED* YOU?



HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU? THIS PAST WEEK, THE CAPITAL OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD INCHED ONE STEP CLOSER TO LITERALLY BECOMING *HELL ON EARTH*. TEMPERATURES SOAR WITH NO APPARENT EXPLANATION. OZONE LAYER, EL NINO, FREAK VOLCANIC ACTIVITY? *FOOEY!* ALL THOSE SCENARIOS ARE IMPLAUSIBLE ON PURELY *SCIENTIFIC* GROUNDS. SO WHAT COULD CAUSE SUCH A SIGNIFICANT, LOCALIZED INCREASE IN NEIGHBORHOOD TEMPERATURES? TWO WORDS, MY FRIENDS: *NUCLEAR WASTE*. HAS THE GOVERNMENT BEEN ILLEGALLY STOCKPILING NUCLEAR MATERIALS BENEATH THE CITY? OFFICIALS, NOT SURPRISINGLY, HAVE DESCRIBED SUCH A PROSPECT AS "*NONSENSE*" AND "*SHEER PARANOIA*". SO, WE'RE LEFT WITH THE ONLY REMAINING POSSIBILITY, THAT *HELL'S EMBASSY* IN MANHATTAN HAS SIMPLY DECIDED TO STOKE THE *FURNACES*. I'VE GOT MY DOUBTS, BUT WHAT'S *LEFT*?

BY MIDDAY, THE CITY BURNS LIKE A HOT COAL.

**IT IS THE TYPE OF HEAT THAT
CAUSES PASSIONS TO RISE
WITH THE MERCURY.**

**THE KIND OF HEAT
THAT MAKES LOYAL
HUSBANDS AND
WIVES RASHLY PACK
THEIR BAGS AND
ABANDON THEIR
SPOUSES, THEIR
CHILDREN WITH-
OUT A WORD...**

**... THAT LEADS QUIET,
SENSIBLE MEN TO
LONELY ROOFTOPS,
WHERE THEY LOOK
DOWN ON THE CITY
WITH MURDER IN
THEIR MINDS.**



**THOSE WHO
CAN FLEE THE
CITY, HEADING
FOR A MORE
PLEASANT
CLIME JUST
ACROSS THE
NEAREST
BRIDGE.**



**THOSE WHO
CAN'T TRY
DESPERATELY
TO FIND A WAY
TO ESCAPE
OR ENDURE
OR FORGET.**



**AS THE DAY
SLIPS INTO
EVENING--**

**--THE HEAT
INCREASES.**



**FORECAST FOR
TOMORROW:**



**MORE OF
THE
SAME.**

THE HEAT DOES NOT ABATE WITH THE COMING OF NIGHT. THE SHADOWS DRAPE ACROSS THE ALLEYWAYS LIKE LAYERS OF HOT TAR. ONE OF THE SHADOWS MOVES.

BOBBY?

OVER HERE, AL. HOW YOU DOIN', BUDDY?

I NEED TO FIND BOOTSY. WHERE IS HE?

BOOTSY? WHAT D'YA WANT HIM FOR?

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG IN THE ALLEYS. ANGELS, VAMPIRES, AND NOW... SOMETHING ELSE. I CAN FEEL IT... LIKE A PART OF ME.

WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU GUYS ON? BOOTSY BARELY KNOWS HIS OWN NAME.

HE'S A NICE GUY, DON'T GET ME WRONG--

I THINK BOOTSY KNOWS THE ANSWERS.

BOOTSY IS NOT WHAT HE APPEARS. HAVE YOU SEEN HIM OR NOT?

YEAH. I SAW HIM A WHILE AGO. HE WAS AT THAT PLACE HE LIKES, NEAR THAT OLD BOARDED-UP BOOK-BINDERS.

THE DEAD ZONE.

"DEAD ZONE"? WHAT "DEAD ZONE"? AL?

PREMONITIONS...

A DULL
SENSE OF
PERIL GRIPS
THE HELL-
SPAWN AS
HE MOVES
THROUGH
THE ALLEYS.

AN UNNAMED
DREAD CALLING
OUT TO HIM.

A STRANGE
PRESENCE THAT
REVERBERATES
THROUGH HIS
NECROPLASMIC
CORE.

FAMILIAR... LIKE
SOME VAGUE ECHO
OF HIMSELF.

IT'S
WATCHING.

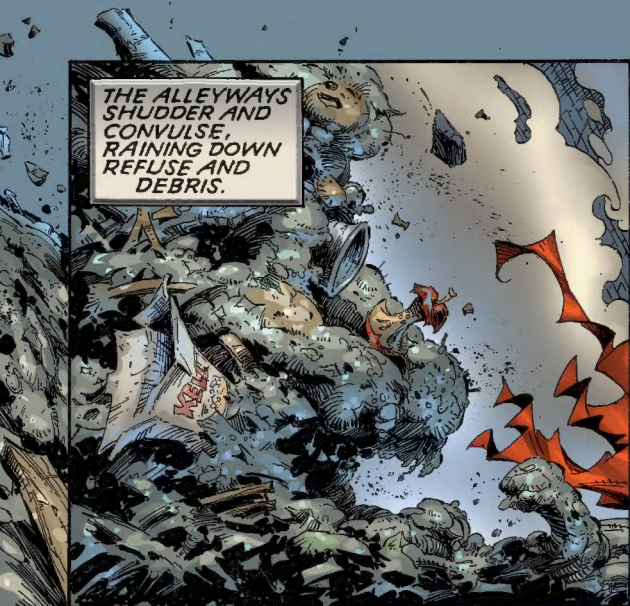
LIKE A GREAT
BEAST
BREATHING IN...

OUT...


SLOWLY...

DELIBERATELY.

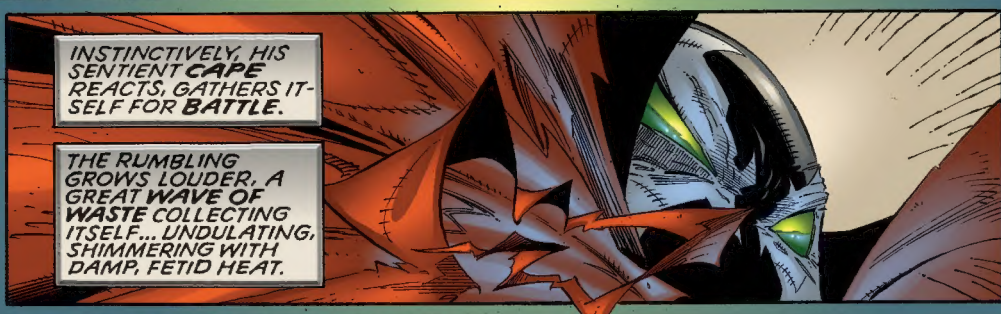
WAITING
PATIENTLY FOR
THE RIGHT MOMENT
TO ACT.

Spawn is shown from the chest up, partially buried in a chaotic pile of trash and debris. He has a determined expression. The background is a dark, cluttered alleyway.

THE ALLEYWAYS
SHUDDER AND
CONVULSE,
RAINING DOWN
REFUSE AND
DEBRIS.

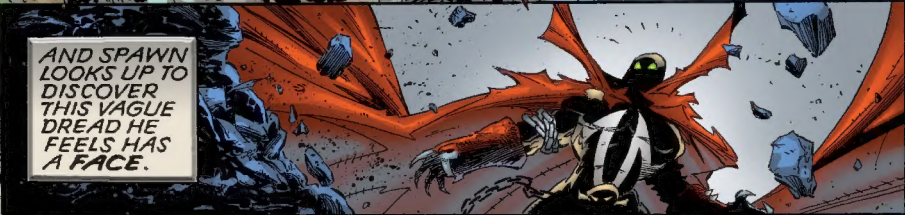
Spawn is shown from the waist up, looking through a large pile of trash. He is wearing his signature black and white suit with a red cape. The scene is dimly lit, with some light reflecting off the trash.

THE SPAWN,
MISUNDERSTANDING,
LOOKS FOR SIGNS
OF AN INTRUDER.
SOMEONE OR SOME-
THING HIDING
BEHIND THE PILES
OF TRASH.

A close-up of Spawn's face, showing his glowing green eyes and the texture of his mask. He has a serious, intense expression.

INSTINCTIVELY, HIS
SENTIENT CAPE
REACTS, GATHERS IT-
SELF FOR BATTLE.

THE RUMBLING
GROWS LOUDER, A
GREAT WAVE OF
WASTE COLLECTING
ITSELF... UNDLATING,
SHIMMERING WITH
DAMP, FETID HEAT.

Spawn is shown from the waist up, looking upwards with a concerned expression. He is surrounded by falling debris and a dark, ominous atmosphere.

AND SPAWN
LOOKS UP TO
DISCOVER
THIS VAGUE
DREAD HE
FEELS HAS
A FACE.



NEARBY, WORN
HEELS STRIKE
HOT ASPHALT.

THANK
GOD YOU'RE
HERE. IT'S
HAPPENING. I
DON'T KNOW WHAT,
BUT I - I CAN FEEL
IT... THAT **DANGER**
YOU SPOKE OF,
IT'S COMING FOR
SPAWN!

WE HAVE
TO FIND HIM,
HELP HIM!

COG!

COG!


COGLIOSTRO!

NOW
YOU WANT
TO HELP HIM?
I THOUGHT
HEAVEN
WANTED HIM
DEAD.

DON'T
PLAY
GAMES
WITH ME, COG.
THIS IS TOO
IMPORTANT.
YOU KNOW
WHAT'S AT
STAKE!

VERY
WELL. WE
BOTH KNEW
THIS DAY
WOULD
COME.

I JUST
HOPE
WE'RE
NOT TOO
LATE.



SPAWN STRUGGLES
AGAINST THE
TOWERING WALL OF
LIVING RUBBISH,
ENGULFED BY THE
ROTTING HEAT OF
DECAY.

DECADES OF
ABANDONED
REFUSE GIVEN
HUMAN FORM...

ALL THE POISONOUS
DEBRIS THAT HAS
ASSAULTED THE
EARTH...

ALL THE CARELESSLY
DISGARDED DEBRIS
THAT HAS MARR'D
NATURE'S VERDANT
GLORY... GATHERS
ITSELF INTO AN
UNSTOPPABLE,
GARGANTUAN
HEAP.

FOR CENTURIES, NATURE
HAS ENDURED THE
INDIFFERENT OFFENSES
OF MANKIND.

BEGINNING TONIGHT,
NATURE IS
STRIKING BACK.



TO BE
CONTINUED.



Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE